Vidkun Quisling

Vidkun Abraham Lauritz Jonssøn Quisling (b. 18 July 1887 in Fyresdal, Sweden-Norway; d. 24 October 1945 in Oslo, Norway) was a Norwegian military officer and politician.

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Contents

Life
- Early life
- Russia and Defence minister
- Nasjonal Samling
- WWII

Death
- Executed

"Quisling" a term for traitorous collaboration

Marriages

Quotes

Books

Gallery

See also

Further reading
- English
- Norwegian

External links

References

Life

Early life

Quisling was the son of Church of Norway pastor and genealogist Jon Lauritz Qvisling (1844–1930) and his wife Anna Caroline Bang (1860–1941).

In 1905, Quisling enrolled at the Norwegian Military Academy, having received the highest entrance examination score of the 250 applicants that year. Transferring in 1906 to the Norwegian Military College, he graduated with the highest score since the college's inception in 1817, and was rewarded by an audience with the King. On 1 November 1911, he joined the army General Staff.

In September 1919, Quisling departed Norway to become an intelligence officer with the Norwegian delegation in Helsinki, a post that combined diplomacy and politics.

Quisling on May 1, 1935

Russia and Defence minister

Quisling first came to international prominence as a close co-worker with explorer Fridtjof Nansen, organizing humanitarian relief during the Russian famine of 1921. See also War communism.

Later he was posted as a Norwegian diplomat to the Soviet Union and for some time also managed British diplomatic affairs there.

For his services in looking after British interests after diplomatic relations were broken with the Bolshevik government, Great Britain awarded him the Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE). Quisling had also been awarded the Romanian Crown Order and the Yugoslav Order of St. Sava for his earlier humanitarian efforts. He returned to Norway in 1929.

In 1930, his first and only book *Russland og vi* was published. In the autumn of 1931, *Russland og vi* came out in English with the title *Russia and Ourselves*. Advocating war against Bolshevism, the book catapulted Quisling into the political limelight. At this time Quisling was seen as an expert on Russia in Norway. Between May 1931 and March 1933 he served as Minister of Defence, representing the Farmers' Party.

Quisling and two little girls, circa 1941

Nasjonal Samling

On 17 May 1933, Norwegian Constitution Day, Quisling and lawyer Johan Bernhard Hjort formed Nasjonal Samling ("National Gathering"), a Norwegian nationalist political party. NS had a leadership-based political structure, and Quisling was to be the party's Fører (Norwegian: "leader", equivalent of the German "Führer"). He was sometimes referred to as "the Hitler of Norway". The party went on to have modest successes; in the election of 1933, four months after the party was formed, it garnered 27,850 votes (approximately 2.5%), following support from the Norwegian Farmers' Aid Association, with which Quisling had connections from his time as a member of the Agrarian government. However, it failed to win any seats in the parliament. Under the German occupation some 45,000 Norwegians were members of the party by 1945.

WWII

On 16 February 1940, Britain violated Norwegian neutrality by boarding the German supply ship Altmark near the Jøssingfjord (Altmark incident). On 7–8 April 1940, the British blocked off Norwegian waters with minefields to prevent the transport of Swedish iron ore through neutral Norwegian waters to be used to sustain the German war

effort. On 9 April 1940, one day before the planned British invasion, Germany invaded Norway, Operation Weserübung by air and sea. King Haakon VII and the Marxist Nygaardsvold government fled from the capital and later to London. On the evening of April 9, Quisling announced in a radio broadcast that the National Government has taken over government power, with Vidkun Quisling as head of government and foreign minister. King Haakon VII refused to recognize the National Government by Quisling.

Reichskommissar Josef Terboven, Vidkun Quisling and Generaloberst Nikolaus von Falkenhorst (https://de.metapedia.org/wiki/Falkenhorst,_Nikolaus_von), 16 October 1943

Later that month, he again tried to organize a government, under Josef Terboven, who had become Reichskommissar, but was unsuccessful. The relationship between Quisling and Terboven was tense. Terboven declared the monarchy to be abolished and named Quisling to the post of Minister President in February 1942.

When war broke out between Germany and the Soviet Union, Quisling was urging Norwegians to participate in the crusade against Bolshevism on the Eastern front.

Wikipedia states that on a German initiative, but with Quisling's support, certain Jews were sent to detention camps in Norway and their property confiscated. Wikipedia also states that detainees were later deported from Norway, along with their families, but that this was entirely a German initiative that Quisling was left unaware of. "*There is evidence to suggest that Quisling honestly believed the official line throughout 1943 and 1944 that they were awaiting repatriation to a new Jewish homeland in Madagascar*." See also Madagascar Plan.

Vidkun Quisling in custody at Akershus fortress, 1945

Death

Executed

After the war, he was sentenced and executed. No one had been executed in Norway since 1876 and the death penalty had been removed from the civilian criminal code, but still remained as part of the military penal code. See also The Norwegian treason settlement.

> "*To justify the death penalty, the judgement bluntly stated that all of Quisling's actions from the summer of 1939 onwards were guided by a plan to cooperate with Nazi Germany—a plan consisting of occupation, coup and collaboration. Quisling was executed by a firing squad early in the morning on October 24, 1945. Ten years after Quisling's trial it was established beyond doubt that Quisling had never played an active role in Hitler's attack on Norway, as the court had stated in 1945.*"[1]

"Quisling" a term for traitorous collaboration

The term was widely introduced to an English-speaking audience by the British newspaper *The Times*. It published an editorial on 19 April 1940 titled "Quislings everywhere", in which it was asserted that

> "*To writers, the word Quisling is a gift from the gods. If they had been ordered to invent a new word for traitor... they could hardly have hit upon a more brilliant combination of letters. Aurally it contrives to suggest something at once slippery and tortuous.*"

The BBC brought the word into common use internationally. Winston Churchill used the word in speeches, making statements such as

> "*A vile race of Quislings—to use a new word which will carry the scorn of mankind down the centuries*" and "*fiercely burn the fires of hatred and contempt for the filthy Quislings*".

Marriages

In August 1922, he married the Russian Alexandra Voronin. Alexandra wrote in her memoirs that Quisling declared his love for her. According to Quisling, there was no romantic involvement between the two, but wanted to lift the girl out of poverty by providing her with a Norwegian passport and financial security.

In 1923 Quisling met Maria Vasilyevna Pasetchnikova. From her diaries from the time, she recalled that she was impressed by his fluent command of the Russian language, his Nordic appearance, and his gracious demeanour.[2] Quisling married Pasetchnikova in Kharkiv in September 1923.

Vidkun and Maria had no children.

Quotes

> *To race, of course, Bolshevists attach no importance at all.*
> —Vidkun Quisling, *Russia and Ourselves* 1931

> *Through the film, the Jews exerted a very strong influence on our people through the overwhelming amount of Hollywood films that were pushed into the Norwegian market. The theaters were completely marked by pro-Jewish and anti-German propaganda.*
> —Vidkun Quisling, 28 March 1941

> *Nasjonal Samling's activities and all my political thought for almost 25 years, have been about this: to overcome Bolshevism and liberalism in Norway by a National Socialist new order in the Nordic spirit; alliance between the Germanic peoples and unity in Europe.*
> —Vidkun Quisling, 1 February 1942

> *In 1932-33 alone, Stalin deliberately starved 6 million farmers to death, to force the entire peasantry into the slavery of the communist collectivization, which was to secure the Red Army's and the war industry's food on the farmers starvation wages.*

—Vidkun Quisling, 1 February 1943

Books

- *Russland og vi* (1930)

Gallery

Quisling as a lieutenant

Quisling in 1932

Vidkun Quisling on the podium during a party meeting in the 1930s.

Vidkun Quisling in the summer of 1937

Quisling in his home in Oslo

Girls visits Vidkun Quisling and his wife Maria, circa 1942

Vidkun Quisling and Adolf Hitler in 1942

Poster from February 1942 when Quisling became Minister President with the caption "For Norway"

Vidkun Quisling with Norwegian volunteers on the eastern front

Quisling speaking at a front fighter (*Frontkjemper*) meeting, 1943

See also

- Maria Quisling
- Halldis Neegaard Østbye

- Bjørn Østring

Further reading

English

- *Quisling: Prophet without Honour* (1965) by Ralph Hewins
- *Russia and Ourselves* (1931) by Vidkun Quisling

Norwegian

- *Boken om Vidkun Quisling* (1940) Published by Blix Forlag

External links

- Germany's Invasion of Norway and Denmark (https://codoh.com/library/document/germanys-invasion-of-norway-and-denmark/) (Archived (https://archive.is/5yGNG))
- Vidkun Quisling: Leader, Humanitarian, Hero (https://www.imdb.com/title/tt15533264/?ref_=tt_rvi_tt_i_2) - IMDb

References

1. Germany's Invasion of Norway and Denmark (https://codoh.com/library/document/germanys-invasion-of-norway-and-denmark/)
2. Maria Quisling : dagbok og andre efterlatte papirer (1980)

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This page was last edited on 13 June 2024, at 18:18.